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ABSTRACT

Part of a series of studies on higher education in different countries, this paper examines internal differentiation of Japanese higher education and the problem of coordination, using a comparative perspective. The crucial difference in the division of universities by subjects among different nations has been between chair and department organization. In Japan, both kinds of organization are found, but the chair structure has been the more important of the two. The Japanese tier structure has been more like the European mode than the American; there is no sharp distinction between undergraduate and graduate study as in the United States. Both Japan and the United States have a range of institutional types that have developed under private sponsorship as well as state authority. Japan has numerous sectors and subsectors among its large population of 1,000 institutions. Japan has such institutional hierarchy in higher education; there is a vertical ladder of prestige ranking among the many sectors. For over a century, Japan has provided bureaucratic coordination of higher education in the form of a national ministry of education, and professors are also involved in coordination nationally as well as locally. Political influences on higher education have been exerted by political officials and to some extent by external groups, and the consumer market is extremely active in Japanese higher education. (SW)

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THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

by

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YALE HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH GROUP

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THE JAPANESE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

In the last quarter of the twentieth century it is appropriate indeed that the earthly observer as well as the man from Mars should be struck dumb by the efforts of modern nations to conduct the higher learning. How is it possible that the West Germans so often turn specific educational issues into global ideological conflicts and then run to central computers as well as the courts for accommodating resolutions? That the modern Italian system still has no way of selecting at the doors of medical schools but has to let in all applicants and then count on attrition? That a decade of post-1968 reform in "rational," planning-minded France has pleased no one, least of all the students? That, in the United States, countless post-secondary institutions are heavily engaged in remedial education for students who read, write, and do their sums at eighth and ninth-grade levels? And that, in Japan, academic and political leaders should be highly exercised about low standards in the private sector after they allowed the burdens of mass higher education to be shouldered for several decades by private institutions that must survive on tuition payments from eager consumers? Clearly, in modern higher education, problems do not come neat and solutions are never simple. The new language of organizational theory is even appropriate: we are dealing with loosely-coupled social systems in which ambiguity is a dominant characteristic -- vague goals, soft technologies, fragmented work, diffused power, and participants who wander in and out (March and Olsen, 1976). Japanese higher education has an honorable place in this world-wide club of embattled and semi-anarchic systems.

That place was seized by the rapid and thorough move of Japan into mass

higher education in recent decades, enrolling impressive proportions of the appropriate age groups. A high rate of attendance in a country of over one hundred million people has made for a startling system indeed, one in which the scale of operations is several times larger than that found anywhere in Europe and of an entirely different magnitude from that of such leading small countries as Sweden, Holland, and Australia. What can be usefully said about this huge system in comparative perspective? I will examine first how the system is divided into parts, using categories that can be applied to any nation and noting some important inter-nation similarities and differences. The sum is a picture of the internal differentiation of Japanese higher education within which we can locate endemic problems and persisting dilemmas. I then turn at greater length to the knotty problem of how the many parts are linked together, the problem of coordination in a broad sense, again using comparative categories and attempting to isolate similarities and differences between Japan and other societies. In many of these matters we are only at the beginning of inquiry. But enough is now known about a number of countries to allow us to set some cogent basic categories within which we can generalize modestly while remaining in close touch with reality. In what follows I draw heavily upon conceptual distinctions set forth in two earlier statements (Clark, 1978a; Clark, 1978b) and attempt to apply those ideas to Japan, both to help explain the Japanese case and to further the development of the concepts.

DIFFERENTIATION

Every national system of higher education has a division of labor by fields of knowledge, with operating groups organized around "subjects." We can conceive of these groups systematically by viewing them as potentially grouped and separated in four different ways: by horizontal and

vertical divisions within the single enterprise, which we term sections and tiers; and horizontal and vertical divisions among the enterprises that comprise a national system, which we call sectors and hierarchies.

Sections. As we look at how the work of the distinct subject groups is organized within universities and colleges, the crucial difference across nations has been between Chair and Department organization (Ben-David, 1972; Blau, 1973; Duryea, 1973; Parsons and Platt, 1973; Clark and Youn, 1976). Chair organization, found traditionally in virtually pure form throughout the European continent, has had extensive influences in Britain and has spread throughout the world wherever German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and English modes of organization were carried by colonial power or voluntarily imitated and adopted. Department organization has been found most strongly in the United States, rooted in the way that American colleges and universities, under trustee and administrative campus control, differentiated themselves internally during the nineteenth century without adopting the more personal aspects of guild control that had come down in Europe from the medieval universities. Concentrating responsibility and power in one person, the Chair has been the most important systemic source of personal authority. The Department is a more impersonal unit, commonly spreading responsibilities and powers among a plurality of equal-rank full professors, and in reduced portions to lesser-rank professors, in varying blends of collegial and bureaucratic control.

In Japan, both chair and department organization are found to a significant extent. But chair structure has been the more important of the two, rooted for nearly a century in the leading universities (Hall, 1975; Wheeler, 1978; Arimoto, 1978; Tomoda and Ehara, 1979). As noted by Hall: "The basic element for budgetary and staffing at Todai [University

of Tokyo] is the chair (kōza)....the doctoral chair remains the basic building block ....the chair, once it has been established is permanent .... the vested interest in established chairs is enormous" (1975: 311-12). Hence we may say that in this crucial matter Japanese academic organization has been more like Europe than the United States. The Japanese variant of the Chair has even stiffened the personal powers of Chairholders more than in many European systems by systematically tying several assistant positions to each Chair, turning it, as the joke goes, into a sofa. The result of such Chair power is that personalism and particularism are inflated, producing a form of guild organization in which the balance between personal and collegial authority is tilted toward the personal (Clark, 1977b: 153-173). There is thereby produced a systemic problem of effective collegial control. Strong chair organization tends to balkanize a national system into thousands of baronial parts, and if the barons are not able to effect a reasonable degree of collegial control the situation invites the integrating counterforce of bureaucratic and political control.

Tiers. Still concentrating on internal organizational structure, we can observe vertical differentiation of units responsible for different levels of training and certification. The traditional European mode of organization has had essentially a single tier. The professional school and other forms of specialization are entered immediately upon admittance to higher education, and the first major degree, taken after some three to six years of course work, certifies basic competence in the profession or discipline. There is not a sharp distinction between "undergraduate" and "graduate," and units called graduate schools have generally not existed. If there is advanced work for such an advanced degree as the Ph.D., it is handled, often rather informally and without much structure of courses, by

the same faculty units that concentrate their energies in the first-tier operations. In contrast, multi-tier organization has been found most strongly in the United States. The undergraduate tier has been much involved in general education, with limited specialization available. This tier actually breaks into two parts, with an Associate in Arts degree awarded after two years in the community colleges (which now admit one-half of all college students), and the Bachelor's degree after four years. Specialization has been given a home in the second major tier in the university consisting of the graduate school and numerous professional schools that can only be entered after completion of the work of the first level.

Japanese tier structure has been more like the European than the American. The professional school is a first-tier operation. And "the graduate school" traditionally has not been a fundamental unit. Hall has noted, at the University of Tokyo, where graduate training should be the strongest in the nation, such training gets short shrift. "The graduate school is viewed as an extension of the undergraduate course -- an extension preferably avoided by those anxious to get ahead in their careers .... Professors teaching at the graduate level belong either to the Faculties or to the research centers, and devote their primary energies to undergraduate teaching or center work .... The graduate school has no plant, library, faculty, administrative staff, or budget of its own. It is, in fact, no more than a framework for sorting out graduate students into appropriate degree programs.... Research at Todai suffers from the lack of a powerful graduate-school structure" (1975: 312-14). The number of graduate students has been small: as a ratio of graduate to undergraduate students, less than one to thirty compared to one to eight in the United States; in absolute numbers, less than 50,000, compared to over 900,000 in the U.S. (Data from

1972 and 1974: Research Institute for Higher Education, Hiroshima University, 1976).

The low degree of vertical differentiation produces a host of problems. The university and the system as a whole are poorly structured for vigorous support of the most advanced training, "graduate education." Hence the effort in recent years to create more graduate-school units. And the problems of access are complicated when the principles of open access and selectivity clash within the first tier (Clark, 1977a). This clash has been severe in Europe -- the issue of numerus clausus -- since students who completed the secondary level traditionally had the guarantee of entering higher education and freely choosing a field, including medicine, a guarantee now sharply challenged in order to limit numbers and protect standards in certain fields. Japan, of course, has had no such guarantee and has "handled" selection by allowing institutional control and variation among institutions, producing an "examination hell" for entry into the most prestigious institutions and soft, permissive entry in many other institutions where fees paid by consumers are needed to pay the bills. The general point is that a greater degree of vertical differentiation softens the clash between mass entry and selectivity by allowing lower more open levels to screen for the higher more closed levels -- just as in the past the secondary level screened heavily for higher education and still today does to some degree. The screening function is still heavily at the secondary level in most countries, but a good share of it moves up into the first several years of higher education as mass entry widens. Thus we find such traditional single-tier systems as France attempting to evolve a structure of first, second, and third "cycles," with the first serving as a tier in which a more general education preceeds and screens for the more specialized work (Geiger, 1977).

Sectors. Of the four forms of differentiation discussed here, the creation of different types of institutions is probably the most important. And countries vary widely on this dimension. One arrangement is a single sector only, under state control, found in nationalized sets of universities that monopolize higher education. Italy is a good example. A second pattern is a binary or multi-sector structure, but also with nearly all institutions under control of the national state, in which the several types -- university, teachers college, technological school -- serve as major parts of a system operating under the national purse. France has been a classic example, with its striking division between grandes écoles and universities; and Britain has evolved rapidly in this direction in the last two decades as the national government has become the prime supporter of all sectors and inclined to think of a formal national system with several major parts, e.g., the well-known "binary policy" enunciated in the mid-1960s. The third type is a combination of regional and national control over several sectors, found in such "federal" systems as Australia, Canada, and West Germany, and to some extent Great Britain and Mexico. And then lastly the most diversified type is that of multiple sectors under private as well as public control. Here is where Japan and the United States become grouped together in cross-national comparison: each has a range of institutional types that have developed under private sponsorship as well as state authority. Japan has numerous sectors and sub-sectors among its large population of 1,000 institutions (in European systems the institutional count usually remains below a hundred and sometimes as small as a handful): a small set of national universities, formerly known as imperial universities, supported by the national government; a larger number of additional public institutions, variously supported by city and provincial as well as national

government; a large number of private universities and colleges, varying so widely in quality as to amount to several different sub-systems; and over 500 junior colleges, mainly private ones. And so it is in the U.S., where institutional classifications of the 1970s have gone to ten or more categories in order to give some degree of homogeneity to each type (Carnegie Commission, 1976). In both Japan and the U.S., the public and the private constitute two major sub-systems; and several kinds of universities and colleges, plus the two-year units, amount to at least a three-fold breakdown within these major parts.

Looking at the cross-national record, it seems clear that a monopoly of sponsorship by central government leads toward a single or small number of sectors; multiple sponsorship by different levels of government, and especially by a private sector, leads toward institutional diversity. If kept strong, multiple sponsorship in Japan promises to be an important resource that most other countries lack, even though at this time there is great concern about the quality of work in many of the private institutions and efforts are underway to develop more integrated sponsorship and supervision. Multiple and separated sponsorship seems a basic way of promoting genuine institutional differences, in contrast to the hope in so many narrowly-constructed systems that they will be able to plan, develop, and manage a new diversity from the center. Planned differentiation is heavily problematic, in the face of so many pressures toward uniformity on the part of clientele, teaching staff, and administrators alike.

The on-going problem of extensive sector differentiation is that it makes a national system appear chaotic. At a minimum, there is a problem of intra-system linkage. A partial answer to the linkage problem is credits for short units of study that can be transferred across permeable sector

boundaries, as in the case of the American semester units of course completion that can be transferred from one type of college to another as they are judged valid by receiving institutions. At a maximum, the extensively differentiated system, with its private components, will have a problem of institutional exploitation of consumers that virtually demands administrative intrusion. There will be a sizeable number of institutions characterized by opportunism, corruption, and deviant standards. In the United States, "degree mills" still abound, notably in California and Florida, able under varying state laws and the rights of private business to stay a step ahead of the state and voluntary accrediting bodies that attempt to catch up with them. And in Japan stories abound of under-the-table fees paid by parents for admission of sons and daughters and of extremely poor conditions in some institutions, encouraging the government to attempt to establish standards for private institutions as part of the price of increased state subsidy.

Hierarchies. There is little doubt that Japan is the land of institutional hierarchy in higher education. The many sectors do not simply exist side by side with a cozy parity of esteem. Rather they are swung into a vertical ladder of prestige ranking, an arrangement fathered by governmental intentions of a century ago of training an highly competent elite at the imperial universities, particularly Tokyo and Kyoto, and even in certain faculties within them. That intention was realized, and institutionalized, and has persisted and conditioned the rest of the system even as diverse sectors emerged and the system swelled greatly in size. The Japanese degree of monopolization of elite placement by a small peak of the hierarchy has only been paralleled in the Western World by the Oxford-Cambridge top of the British system, which still does well in manning the British Cabinet and the top civil service, and the grandes écoles top of the French system, which has

been so untouchable that it never became a significant issue in the 1968 French crisis and the host of attempted reforms that have ensued. Other societies have institutional hierarchies in higher education — each one as far as the eye can see -- but to a lesser extent. The U.S. and Canada occupy a middle ground in this respect; West Germany and Italy have relatively flat hierarchies.

Hierarchy by prestige ranking of sectors is based considerably on perceived value of their output. Where are graduates placed in the labor force and otherwise allotted life chances? Sharply peaked hierarchies have come from monopolies or near-monopolies of placement. Countries such as Germany and Italy that have the less-steep hierarchies are ones in which elite placement has been shared by a good share of the family of institutions. Hierarchy is also based on position in the educational ladder of levels of training: in the U.S. and elsewhere, universities giving the Ph.D. are generally (but not always) ranked over colleges giving the bachelor's degree, which are ranked over the two-year colleges. Additional discrimination in prestige assignment is also then found among those of a given level: as a state university, the University of Michigan rates higher than the University of Montana. Close attention to prestige is generated by competition and inter-unit rivalry.

Institutional hierarchies have a wide range of significant effects, good and bad. One of the more undesired effects of a sharply peaked hierarchy is the examination hell so often remarked in Japan: so many want to get into a few institutions. Another likely outcome is dedifferentiation, a reduction of diversity, by academic drift: "lesser" institutions converge voluntarily, by imitation, upon a single model of institutional excellence, power, and prestige. And a third likely consequence, generally

unanticipated as well as undesired, is inbreeding of staff -- a phenomenon discussed below as characteristic of the academic labor market in Japan. But there are also some desirable outcomes. One is a guarantee of relatively high competence in the graduates placed in the civil service. Countries that have an elite route of recruitment and training for top government employment, via several peak institutions, seem more likely to have a competent civil service than those who do not. For example, the French grandes écoles, carefully skimming the cream of the cream of French youth, have led toward bureaucratic competence, while, in comparison, the Italians, lacking this concentrated point of recruitment and training, have a much less selection flow from universities to government that seems an important part of the long slide of Italian public administration into mediocrity. In comparative perspective, Japanese public administration seems to exhibit competence (Craig, 1975). Elite recruitment via the sharply tapered peak of the higher education system probably then deserves some of the credit.

* * * * *

Our review of the differentiation of Japanese higher education in comparative perspective has identified basic problems that are endemic in the Japanese structure. The extent of chair organization in the sectioning of the university produces the problems of baronial favoritism and excessive fragmentation. The shortage of vertically-arranged tiers of training within the university produces the problems of effective graduate training and of softening the clash between open and selective admissions. The considerable diversity of institutional sectors produces the problems of system linkage, highly differentiated standards, and consumer exploitation. The high degree of institutional hierarchy produces the problems of examination hell, academic drift, and staff inbreeding. All such problems and outcomes surely

have multiple sources; but cross-national comparison suggests that much cause is found in the division of labor within and among institutions.

COORDINATION

As should now be clear, all national systems of higher education are composed of numerous differentiated, disparate elements, even those systems we have identified as relatively unitary and uniform, since work is organized around a very large number of fields of knowledge and training that range across an alphabetical spectrum from archeology to zoology. The work clusters may be relatively tightly or loosely linked: in a heavily-planned society they may all at least be parts of a single formal national system operating under a national department; in a minimally-planned society the many elements may have no formal inclusive organization and indeed some will operate much like individual enterprises in a market. How then do we compare in any detail the means of coordination?

It is not enough to say that some systems are formally coordinated and others simply are not. For it turns out that there are many means of co-ordering academic elements. We first need to loosen the blinders of the term "coordination" as commonly used by citizens and those who write dictionaries. To coordinate, according to Webster, means "to bring into a common action, movement, or condition; to adjust; harmonize" (1934). We therefore think immediately of coordinators, active agents who link parts together to produce unified movement and global harmony. Common usage of "coordination" has been similar in meaning, pointing to formal systems guided by planning and management. But to speak effectively of coordination, especially at the level of whole nations, we need a more open framework within which we may consider how parts are related to each other and to the whole of large systems, whether the parts are deliberately linked or not, common or

dissimilar, and working in harmony or disharmony. It is better to assume that order is variously determined, rather than produced by administration alone, much in the fashion of economic historians and institutional economists who approach economic organization as a problem of markets and interpersonal relations as well as of polities and agencies (Lindblom, 1977; Nelson, 1977). Karl Polanyi has pointed out that economic processes have been ordered in various societies by custom, kinship, and markets, as well as by "authority" (1971). And so it is for educational processes: they may even be given some definable order by shared unconscious assumptions, tacit agreements, and other intangible elements, as well as by authoritative command and explicit rule. Indeed, academics may even be bonded closely together by hallowed symbols as in the uttering of the phrase "we are a community of scholars."

As we look at the bare bones of national systems of higher education, we have seen that they come in quite different sizes and shapes, varying from tight and compact to loose and sprawling. In these varied settings, and extending through them in different strengths and combinations, there are basic processes that link fields of study and institutions together so as to compose systems. These processes are at least four in kind which we can refer to as coordination by bureaucracy, profession, politics, and market.

Bureaucratic Coordination

Bureaucracy is a well-known concept and bureaucratic coordination a widely-observed phenomenon. Administrative agencies, such as national departments of education, increase their coordinating capacity by a host of bureaucratic means. They increase the number and complexity of rules designed to effect consistency. They increase the degree of specialization in administrative work, shifting administration from amateurs to experts,

recruiting on grounds of administrative credentials and experience, and gradually developing a separate administrative class that comes to have a subculture of its own. And it comes as no news that central agencies increase the number of central administrators. The administrative organs also expand bureaucratically by expanding their jurisdictional coverage: old departments are given or seize larger responsibilities; specialized bureaus and commissions are consolidated into comprehensive units. And nearly everywhere these days bureaucratic coordination is strengthened by layering. Decentralized systems have been adding higher levels of coordination, as in Australia, West Germany, and the United States. Centralized systems have been introducing or strengthening the intermediate levels, as in the recent introduction of regional councils in Sweden. Students of public administration have noted that layering is a common lasting structural effect of reforms -- "the piling of administrative echelon upon administrative echelon is an unremitting quest for coordination, symmetry, logic, and comprehensive order" (Kaufman, 1971: 76-77). Thus our bureaucratic pyramids in higher education can grow taller from layering, wider from jurisdictional expansion, crammed with more people through personnel enlargement, filled with more expertise through administrative specialization, and equipped with massive bodies of regulations through the expansion of rules. All the above processes, separately or together, tend to increase the coordinating influence of bureaucrats.

For over a century, Japan has provided bureaucratic coordination of higher education in the form of a national ministry of education. When, after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, government leaders embarked upon a forced modernization of the country, the ministry became the central vehicle for planning and establishing the University of Tokyo and later the other

imperial universities that were to dominate the system. As in most European systems, and especially France, the central ministry was soon so institutionalized that its existence became part of the natural order of things, an unchallenged vehicle of system-building. Even the American Occupation after World War II, which was full of global plans and attempted broad reforms, never seriously challenged the existence of the central bureaucracy, even as an effort was made to decrease its powers. Hence throughout the development of modern higher education in Japan, bureaucratic coordination has been a primary form.

State educational bureaucracies can be benign or active. In less developed societies they often exist in a state of near stupor, or are so poorly staffed and caught between powerful politicians and professors that they exhibit little initiative. But a "responsible," reform-minded, modern agency has to be intrusive: it is seen as the primary administrative tool for linking disparate parts into a system and guiding the system in desirable directions. We may note that Japanese higher education currently seems to be witnessing a major increase in bureaucratic coordination. Since the late 1960s, there has been much talk about the need for planning and planning has gradually become a regular exercise. Those who follow such matters speak of system-wide planning actually beginning in 1974, with the establishing of the Ad Hoc Study Committee on Higher Education for the purpose of formulating a ten-year plan (Narita, 1978: 45-47). Most important, the increased public financing of the private sector, in a context of concern for standards and responsible behavior in that sector, has greatly enlarged the jurisdiction of the ministry: the government's "no support, no control" policy of the past has been replaced with "support and some control" (Narita, 1978; Kitamura, 1979). With increased subsidy has come a growing

web of administrative guidelines, right down to required approval for the establishing of departments within colleges and universities, and for any change in enrollment. The government has begun to make itself responsible for expansion and change on quality grounds: hence it must have a bevy of interlocking bureaus, councils, and committees that will intervene selectively.

Professional Coordination

But nowhere is system coordination left to bureaucrats alone. Everywhere professors are involved in coordination, nationally as well as locally. The reasons are functional as well as traditional and ideological. Thousands of daily judgments at operating levels (e.g., has this student passed this examination in theoretical physics?), have to be based, section by section, on the evermore esoteric and specialized knowledge of the professors. The need for expert judgment constantly pulls authority downward in the administrative structure, lodging it in disparate clusters of professionals. This is part of the remarkable strength of the understructure of higher education referred to earlier in comments about the strength of chairs and departments and equivalent units. From that professional base, professors develop wider circles of coordination. They obviously do so along disciplinary lines, linking with one another in national associations of chemists, psychologists, and historians. And academics link with one another along general lines as well. We find them serving at the center in many different bodies: running a national academy of science; appearing on a superior council or committee of higher education, a body that in so many countries was originally established to "advise" the minister of education but then over time has developed veto powers on all important matters; and serving on a grant committee or a

similar buffer commission in countries that have modeled their academic governance in part upon the British University Grants Committee. Not only is much influence exercised by the bottom against the middle and the top, but accord is accumulated collegially up the line and at the top. This form of coordination may be called professional; or it may be termed academic oligarchy, since a relatively small number of academic notables dominate locally and serve on the central bodies; or it may be labeled control by academic barons or even an academic Mafia, since particular notables acquire significant influence and adjust to one another informally and privately as well as formally and publicly. In fact, the specific forms and outcomes are sufficiently varied as to require assorted characterizations. For example, there has been much academic oligarchy in both Italy and Britain. But in the first case systemic pressures have pushed behavior toward the personal and particularistic, while in the second a marriage of elite control and high standards has made the behavior of the notables more collegial and universalistic. The British University Grants Committee, dominated by senior academics, has been widely admired as having given rather decent results in the half-century since its establishment in 1920.

We can observe imposing professional influence in Japanese higher education at both local and national levels. The high degree of guild-like control within the university and college, down when the academic work is actually done, can lead to formidable llockage of higher-level administrative coordination. Japan's strongest institution, the University of Tokyo, presents the strongest case. Let us follow closely the ~~following~~ observations on decision-making within that university made by (Hall, (1975:322-23):

At Todai [University of Tokyo] the downward flow of the ministry's budgetary powers and the upward filtering of educational and other campus policies are not only poorly meshed. The latter also tends to fall apart in a decision-making process where authority is fragmented and has gravitated steadily toward the bottom; where individual Faculties retain an effective veto over university-wide decisions; and where consensus within the Faculty itself is little more than an amorphous confluence of the wills of individual professors, or of small, tightly-knit, intra-Faculty groups. Although the relative importance of the departments, seminars, and chairs varies considerably from one Faculty to the next, the effective decision-making (or blocking) power tends to lie with one or the other of the sub-Faculty groups.

The chair has become the most basic unit of autonomy within Todai today. The senior chair professor, with his subordinates roped in by a web of personal obligations and unremovable himself, exercises the preponderant power in intra-Faculty deliberations . . . .

Nominally, it is the senate that formulates university policy and functions as the supreme decision-making organ . . . . The senate, however, is a purely ornamental assemblage that does little more than rubber-stamp decisions taken by the deans' conference, an informal conclave with no basis in formal laws or regulations which exercises the only effective campus-wide authority at Todai. Since the

deans act strictly as the spokesmen for their own Faculties, however, any decisions of the deans' conference reflect no more than an adjustment of individual Faculty positions, which leaves the ten Faculty councils as the most powerful voices in Todai's decision-making process.

In short: the chair professors individually control domains of work: they control the Faculty level of governance by "amorphous confluence" of their wills; and that level controls the campus-wide level. Coordination is provided by mutual adjustment among powerful professionals who direct small clusters of workers and provide negotiated order within larger clusters as they use their considerable formal and informal power against one another.

And then there seems little doubt, despite a shortage of empirical observation, that Japanese academic notables play an important coordinating role at higher levels of the system. As in other national systems nominally dominated by a Ministry of Education, with a minister at the apex of a pyramid, the need for consultation with, and cooptation of, leading academics is high. "The field" must be carried rather than bullied, or else implementation becomes virtually impossible. Professors sit on the major national bodies which are responsible for establishing and abolishing institutions (the University Chartering Council) and for supervising standards through accreditation (the University Accreditation Association). They staff the Japan Academy of Science, there to decide on research policy and the allocation of money for scientific research. And they have developed a number of voluntary associations which link them together and provide an effective counterforce to bureaucratic coordination: the Japan Teacher's Union, The National Universities Association, and various private university associations (Wheeler, 1977). In a national system so large and diversified,

so full of baronial power, so infused with democratic doctrines of decentralization, and so affected by distrust of possible governmental dictate, many pathways of professional linkage have developed. This, too, is coordination, even if it is not the coordination envisioned by simplistic views of simple structures.

Political Coordination

The bureaucratic and the professional shade off into the political, to forms of linkage that express the struggle of various interests. Such forms are widespread but thus far have been poorly studied. But at least we can point briefly to the co-ordering influence of regular political officials, external interest groups, and internal groups.

Virtually everywhere among advanced industrial societies, the 1960s and 1970s have witnessed in higher education an increase in the influence of elected officials and those appointed to top offices by political parties and regimes. Such officials have been held more responsible by the public for solutions to growing problems and have become more assertive and intrusive. More issues in higher education are divided along the lines of party politics, legislative coalitions, and power exchanges among central executives. And experts on higher education policy even develop in many countries within the party, the legislature, and the prime minister's own office, giving the politician the expertise to enter an arcane domain. And thus it has been in Japan, to some degree, especially upon the heels of the dramatic actions of the student movement in the latter half of the 1960s that caught public attention and seemed to demonstrate an incapacity on the part of academics to run their institutions effectively and to cope with protest. The Japanese structure has always required some attention by the Diet, the national legislature, since annual financing requires legislative enactment

and many changes necessitated new laws rather than simple rule-making. And then when academic troubles appeared to be out of hand, major attention by higher officials and legislators seemed required. Thus, in 1969, at the height of the student disputes, the Diet debated and passed a Temporary Act for University Management that established new guidelines for settling campus troubles, including such serious threatened actions as suspending all teaching and research, and which strengthened the residual powers of the central Ministry to step in and act whenever an institution appeared unable to restore peace in its midst. Even though such attention abated as dramatic protest receded, "the political class" in Japan, as elsewhere, has seemingly been taught that mass higher education is too important to leave to the educators. Beyond coping with protest, there are always the persistent reasons that it is costly and interests a large number of voters who would like to limit the cost but expand opportunity for their sons and daughters.

Recent years have also seen an increase in the role of external groups in the higher education sector of governments. In its sharpest form, this role amounts to a type of democratic corporatism in which certain vocational organizations have formal rights of representation and participation in national decision-making (Schmitter, 1974; Panitch, 1977; Ruin, 1977; Premfors and Ostergren, 1978). As a matter of degree, corporatism shades off into ways of relating interest groups to governmental action that are less explicit and formal in the interpenetration of government and group. Just about everywhere in democratic societies, some organized lobbies have fairly systematic access to legislative and executive circles.

In Japan, the role of major economic organizations in higher education

policy remains unclear. Over-all, in Japanese government, the influence of big business has apparently long been exaggerated by the stereotype of "Japan, Incorporated," and is apparently also in slow decline (Curtis, 1975). At the same time it may well have increased within the Ministry of Education in recent decades as rising costs and spreading disorder invited attention. Wheeler has noted that the Ministry's main consultative body, the Central Council for Education, "has strongly reflected the views of Japan's financial circles and because of this and because the ministry exercises firm control over its agenda, procedures, and reports, most scholars -- particularly those of a liberal bent -- have refused to serve on it" (1978: 134). In comparative perspective, we may estimate that the effective representation of the points of view of dominant economic organizations in national coordination of higher education in Japan is more similar to the strong linkage that has developed in many European countries, with Sweden a leading example, than it is to the United States. The central ministry provides a focal point for articulation of group interest, in contrast to the dispersion of points of control inherent in the American structure. And we may also guess that the current trend is toward an increase in the role of various external groups, not just those representing top business circles, as higher education becomes everyone's business.

Thirdly, just about everywhere there has been an increase in representation and involvement within the ranks of higher education. This "participation" phenomenon has been particularly strong during the 1970s in Western Europe, with institutions in West Germany and Denmark most notably affected by new rights, including major voting rights, for junior faculty, students, and nonacademic personnel. In one form, it too is corporatist in that it is based on organizations that claim to represent various strata

and factions. In another, it is direct representation from unorganized strata. Models on which it is based have been drawn heavily from two sources: worker participation in industrial decision-making and citizen representation in the general political arena, and has been seen by virtually everyone as a political phenomenon. The new participation has helped weaken the traditional rule of senior professors, but it is still unclear how far it will develop since it has been a prominent phenomenon only in recent years and varies considerably from one country to another and among institutions within a country. In contrast to Europe, for example, it has been weak in the United States. And within Denmark, for example, it has been strong at one new university center, Roskilde, and mild at another, Aalborg. Countertrends have also been stimulated, to roll back "excessives" and undo "mistakes." Thus it remains to be seen how much coordination will be shaped by the new participation. A broad guess is that in most countries it will be a minor item. There is a tendency for the rules of participation to become complicated, as various groups attempt to expand and protect their own rights and reduce the residual powers of others, turning the whole thing into a game for elites. And full-time expert administrators, expanding in number and influence, acquire well-structured power much more readily than do part-time, amateur participants.

In Japan, researchers have noted a steady increase in the participation of junior faculty in the last decade (Tomoda and Ehara, 1979). Somewhat more inclusive and "democratic" faculty meetings have developed at a larger number of institutions. Student participation has grown less, with little or no permanent structural residue left from the often violently-expressed demands of the student protests. Over-all, the increase in participation

in the internal politics of campuses has been considerably less than on the European continent. However, there has been more change in Japan than in the United States, chiefly by way of including junior faculty in more decisions and meetings, a form of participation already well-developed in the U.S. for associate professors, assistant professors, instructors and lecturers. As this occurs in Japan, a blatently "political" form of coordination, one that initially largely expressed the protests of a dispossessed strata, becomes somewhat professionalized as it is absorbed into the traditional value system of academics.

Market Coordination

It has been left primarily to political economists to grasp and explain the ways in which market interaction coordinates the behavior of individuals, groups, and organizations. It is not necessary to slip off into the mystery of an invisible hand that leads individuals to promote larger ends. "All social controls have elements of the automatic, unintended, and unconscious;" and, in market life, people "are deliberate and conscious; but their acts accomplish feats of coordination of which they are not necessarily conscious and which they do not intend" (Lindblom, 1977: 39). As example, one coordinating function of a market system is constant occupational reassignment, with consumer preferences and occupational preferences reconciled in a reshuffling of labor from one field to another, one specialty to another. In general, "exchange" is a basic form of interaction that stands in contrast to authoritative command: it can be seen not only as a method for reshuffling the possession of things but also as a way of controlling behavior and of organizing cooperation among people. And, in higher education, as elsewhere. Even in the most state-dominated systems of higher education, processes of market coordination will be at work.

We may point to at least three types of markets that operate in post-secondary education: the consumer market, the labor market, and the institutional market (Lindblom, 1977: 37-38). Consumer markets are where people normally exchange money for desired goods and services. In education, student payments to institutions are the clearest example: when we hear the word tuition we are in the presence of a consumer market. Governments clearly use a consumer market directly when they award scholarships and other forms of financial aid to students, to be used by the students at various institutions, or use such a market indirectly when the monies flow from government to institutions on the basis of the number of students attracted. The central point is consumer choice. Everywhere apparently, even in the most heavily socialized system of higher education, students have some capacity to vote with their feet, flowing from unattractive to attractive parts, and thereby promoting one component at the expense of another. And in some systems consumer choice is extremely wide not only because diversity is present but also because governmental policy keeps costs to the student extremely low or gives funds to students to spend where they please.

The consumer market is extremely active in Japanese higher education, due to the large quantitative role played by the hundreds of institutions in the private sector and the extensive consumer choice possible among those institutions as well as between them and a number of the public institutions. Constraints within this active market seem mainly of two types: the overwhelming attractiveness of attendance at the several leading institutions makes them places to which many apply and few are chosen -- the notorious "examination hell"; and the limits placed on choice by low income, since the mass of private institutions must depend on middle-class

parents who can afford the tuition and fees. But over-all the consumer market is much more active, even chaotic and disorderly, than in the European systems, and seems in strength, among the advanced industrial societies and possibly among all societies, second only to that found in the American system. Where else is educational motivation and consumer demand for higher education so strong, in a context where private institutions absorb three-fourths of the students?

Labor markets are those in which people offer their capabilities and energies for money: hence faculty and administrative employment constitute such markets. Here, again, this form of market is used heavily by some systems and lightly by others: there are major differences in degree and range of choice and the extent of mobility. The movement of faculty from one institution to another can be limited by firm regime control, as in most Communist countries, or by civil service restrictions and the reduction of differential incentives in unified, uniform systems, as in France and Italy. Particularistic forms of academic oligarchy can also be sharply limiting, as in Italy, as academic barons, each controlling a personal and limited system of sponsorship, impede the free flow of young faculty from one place to another (Clark, 1977b). In contrast, the United States remains the extreme case of an extended and strong labor market in higher education, as public and private institutions freely compete for faculty and administrators, especially in the upper half of the institutional hierarchy. In-between cases of moderate labor markets appear to exist in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, where academic labor is free to move among institutions that select personnel on their own, without central guidance and regulation, but where mobility is restrained, compared to the U.S., by a dampening of differential material rewards in competing for talent as

well as by somewhat stronger norms of civility among institutions.

In this type of market, the Japanese system behaves radically different from the way it does in the consumer market. The flow of academic labor is sharply restricted by three features: the high degree of institutional hierarchy has helped lead to a high degree of institutional inbreeding, as Tokyo and Kyoto have modeled to the nation a pattern in which a prestigious institution hires its own graduates; the high degree of personal control over the fate of subordinates involved in the chair-cum-sofa leads to small protected domains of limited job placement; and the general Japanese tradition of life-long employment reenforces the structural reasons for a young scholar to stay in one group rather than roam around in the manner of an American cosmopolitan counterpart. Inbreeding in Japanese higher education is very high indeed, running as high as 100 percent — "perfect inbreeding!" -- in leading faculties and generally far above what would be acceptable in the United States (Arimoto, 1978). And it remains uncommon to move among institutions. Mobility seems now to be slowly increasing, but the increase starts from a low base and the barriers are strong.

Institutional markets are where enterprises interact with one another, instead of with consumers or employees. Interactions among universities and colleges, in some part, constitute such markets. This is the form of market about which we apparently know least in higher education, yet it is probably the most important one. Modern political economists point out that for the economy as a whole the enterprises are the key since they sit astride the whole market structure (Lindblom, 1977: 37-38). It is the enterprises, large and small, that offer particular options to consumers and employees, often heavily-guided options, even monopolized options.

Everywhere in postsecondary education, established enterprises do indeed "sit astride" the whole structure.

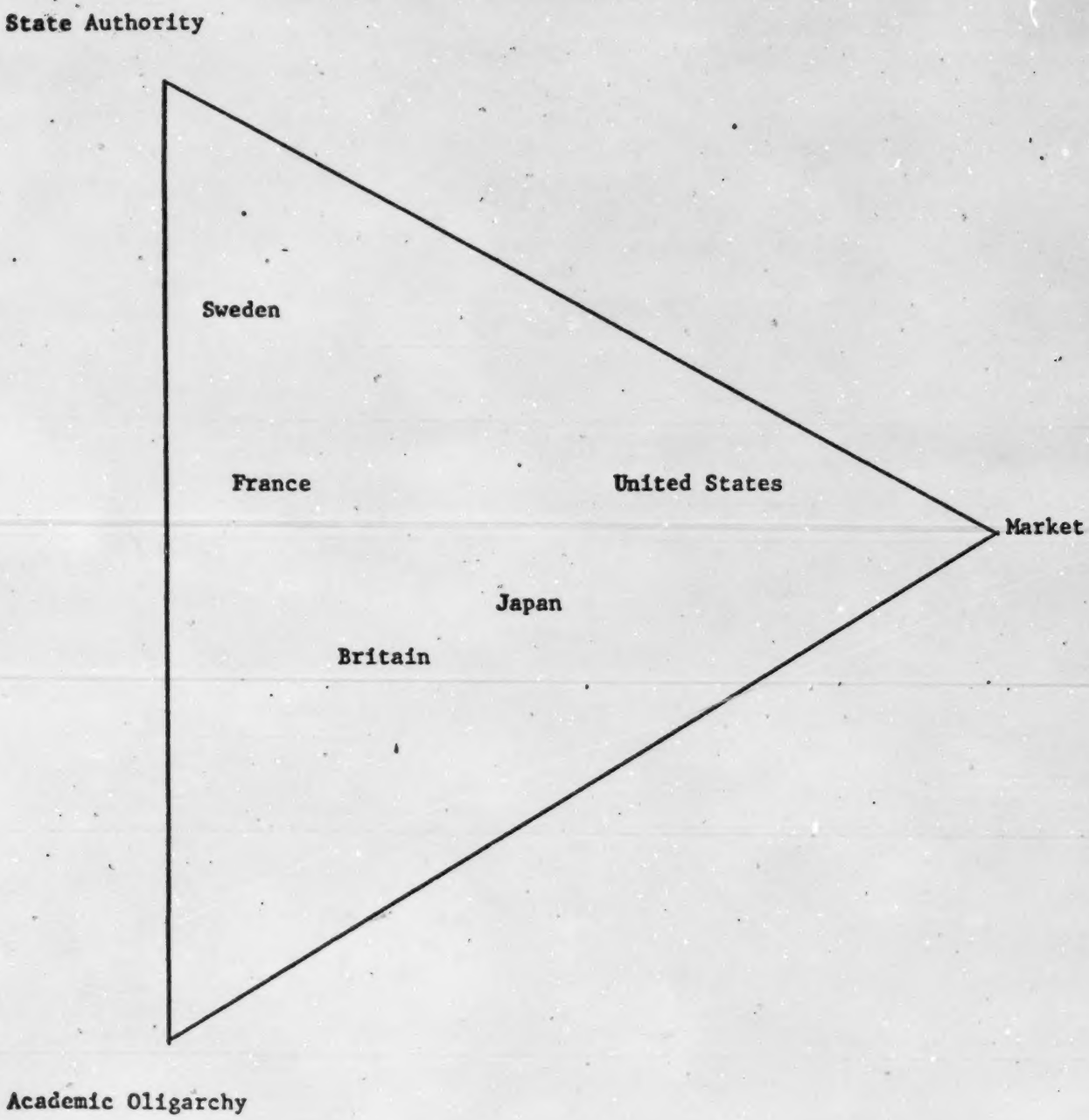
But, of course, to a widely-varying degree. One source of variation is the extent of the institutional hierarchy previously discussed. The steeper the institutional hierarchy, the more does the dominating prestige of a few places tend to affect other institutions and the flow of students and faculty. As outlined earlier, a few institutions sit astride the whole structure to a considerable degree in France, Britain, and Japan. Less dominance of the many by the few is found in the United States, with its moderate hierarchy of institutions, and relatively little in Germany and Italy where a number of institutions occupy the upper, middle and lower levels of institutional ranking. And a second source of inter-country variation is the extent of planned control. Planned systems attempt particularly to control this third type of market, to have centrally-guided relations among the enterprises, while unplanned systems leave inter-unit coordination to self-arrangements among the institutions and to competition among them. Many Communist societies are fairly extreme cases of centralized administered control designed to minimize the institutional market. Yet we may note how readily Communist doctrine may be interpreted to mean virtually the opposite, as in the case of Yugoslavia, where important areas of decision-making in higher education are radically decentralized (Giles, 1978). In Western Europe, the major nationalized systems of France and Italy are good instances of state authority dampening the institutional market of higher education. In the United States, the institutional market is quite active, since sharp competition is a common habit among public institutions as well as among private ones and between the publics and the privates. In Japan, despite the imposing weight of the handful of leading

institutions, the institutional market has been vigorous, since the private institutions to which most students go have been on their own, surviving and prospering according to individual capacity to attract money, staff, and students (Amano, 1979). The great quantitative weight of the private sector pulls the situation away from the tight constraint that would exist among institutions if the whole system were composed of only the public institutions unified by the ministry and dominated by the several leading universities.

* * * * *

As a result of its own special mixture of bureaucratic, political, professional, and market forms of coordination, laid down over and around its own special patterns of differentiation, Japanese higher education may be seen, in sum, as both a semi-guided system and a semi-market system. In extent of guidance by state authority and academic oligarchy, it is more like the historic European modes of academic organization than it is like the American mode. But at the same time, the great quantitative role of the private sector, within which autonomous enterprises fend for themselves, gives the system the heterogeneity of form and market interaction that make it fundamentally unlike Europe and similar to the United States.

To simplify the complexities of coordination, we can tentatively locate countries within a triangular space of state authority (combining state political and bureaucratic forms), academic oligarchy, and market-type interaction. Each corner of the triangle is the extreme of one form and a minimum of the other two, and locations within the triangle represent combinations of the three elements in different degrees of each. (Figure I about here). Small Sweden remains relatively close to the pole of state coordination. Of the countries here compared, it has the most inclusive, tightest system of state supervision; it leaves little to market interaction;


State Authority
Sweden
France
United States
Market
Japan
Britain
Academic Oligarchy

and, during the last two decades, state officials and allied corporatist interest groups have developed a strong capacity at the system level to over-ride the traditionally strong power and privileges of professors. France is similar on the state authority-market dimension, but has more continuing influence by academic oligarchs since in a much larger and more complex system than the Swedish, there remains something of a stand-off between the powers of the central officials and the capacities of university personnel to ward off, reshape, and attenuate state-imposed rules and policies.

Britain locates the most closely of these five countries to rule by academic oligarchy, since state authority has been weaker than on the Continent, market interaction has been weaker than in the United States. and academic notables have had a dominant or significant role in the University Grants Committee, the Council for National Academic Awards, and other national coordinating bodies. Also, Britain's long-standing system of "external examiners," professors testing as one another's universities and colleges, has constructed a network of professional supervision. That network surely has much to do with the capacity of the British system to maintain relatively high standards across the board. In its density of accepted surveillance, it is apparently unmatched by the inspector generals and supervisors found in systems dominated by governmental ministries. Cast in certain specific forms, academic oligarchy can give impressive results.

The United States, qua national system, remains closest to the market extreme and has relatively light professorial influence in the coordination effected consciously at state and national levels. The system as a whole is moving slowly away from the market pole and toward formal coordination

by state and now even national authorities, but still remains well to the right of the center point of our conceptual space.

And then, finally, we must locate Japan close to the midpoint. The system contains impressive degrees of state control and rule by academic notables and market interaction. Of these three characterizations, the market component remains most questionable and perhaps makes sense only as we break it down into the labor, consumer, and institutional markets distinguished earlier. As pointed out, the labor market is radically reduced in Japan, compared to its role in the U.S. system, but the consumer and institutional markets are relatively active. The labor market is like European systems, while the consumer and institutional markets behave more like counterparts in the United States.

CONCLUSION

As in most other advanced societies, fundamental problems in Japanese higher education must necessarily arise from the need to express three, often conflicting, national interests. One is an interest in social justice, which in higher education primarily takes the form of equality of access and, then, secondarily, equality in treatment and outcome. As publicly interpreted virtually everywhere, particularly in Western Europe, this interest presses hard for open-door admission, so that everyone can get in, and uniform standards, so that everyone will be treated equally and fairly. The equity issue is a permanent one in democracies and Japanese higher education will surely see more of it in the near future. The second national interest is in diversity of response, the ability of a sub-system of a nation to accommodate to increasing heterogeneity of demand and to adapt to a high rate of change. This interest becomes ever stronger in higher education, as consumer demands,

labor-force connections, and knowledge cultivation all become more varied than in the past. It presses for a multiplication of types of institutions and levels of training, so that different parts of the system can handle different tasks and spontaneously adapt to different environmental demands. The needed responses are too complicated, ambiguous, and contradictory to be handled by central administration and uniform regulations alone, necessitating the risk of varied and unplanned reaction by semi-autonomous segments. The third major national interest is in competence, the capacity of the highest levels of the educational system to produce and distribute knowledge and to send forth people well-prepared for occupational performance and civic life. This interest can be served in part by administrative efforts to establish minimal, average, and high standards. However, the comparative experience of many countries suggests that competence is basically upheld by a moderately strong but open institutional hierarchy in which status is awarded to persons and institutions on the grounds of perceived quality and in which institutions are able, on this basis, to compete for an elevation in respect and resources.

In effecting such disparate national interests, the structures of national academic systems must necessarily be full of inconsistencies, compromises, and contradictions. Equity has to be limited by the structural arrangements that accommodate diversity and induce competence. Diversity is compromised by the arrangements appropriate for equality in access and outcome, and by the convergence occasioned by imitation in status hierarchies. And competence is restrained by actions carried out in the name of equity and by the uncontrolled fragmentation of programs and standards that inheres in extensive diversity. Thus it is no wonder that Japanese higher education, after a century of modernization and a

quarter-century of rapid evolution into mass higher education, should at this time exhibit a bewildering mixture of the feudal and the modern, the open and the closed, the flexible and the rigid, the elitist and the democratic. It could never have become a modern system of mass education without embodying elemental strains and dilemmas, doing so in its own special way with forms and practices firmly institutionalized in previous decades and interlocked among themselves as well as with a variety of structures in the larger society.

Hence it is not idle chatter to say that effective leadership in the upper circles of Japanese higher education calls for the highest order of sensitivity and wisdom. Such statesmanship means to understand and believe in ambiguity, to accept the corrupting interaction of conflicting values, and to realize that much significant and appropriate change will be spontaneously generated. Precisely because of its great internal differentiation and its diverse pathways of coordination, the domain of modern higher education is a poor one for arbitrary leadership and global planning. It will take uncommon restraint as well as unusual foresight for deliberate efforts, on balance, to improve higher education in Japan.

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